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Face Off at Rutgers University

Libertarian Patriotic Musical Performers Banned from Playing at Political Convention for Supporting Free Speech for All

By Michael Collins Piper

The thought police are now turning into the music police, if a recent incident at Rutgers University in New Jersey is any indication. One of America's brightest young entertainers was recently barred from performing on the Rutgers campus, not because of any "controversial" lyrics in his music, but simply because his Internet web site contained political commentary that some people deemed to be "offensive."

Paul Topete and his rock band, Poker Face, have been entertaining audiences — young and old and of all races and creeds — at concerts and gatherings up and down the East Coast for over a decade. But Topete and the band have also carved out a particular niche in what has been called the "patriotic" movement because there is a distinct pro-freedom slant in the lyrics to some of their songs.

Paul Topete and his band Poker Face played at the last AFP national conference. The band was recently banned from playing at Rutgers University for advocating freedom of speech.

Because of this — plus because the group's music is just plain great — Poker Face has become well-known for its appearances at patriot gatherings. The Poker Face band members believe in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and bring a message of peace and liberty in their appearances.

Despite all this, Topete and Poker Face recently came under savage assault from a tiny yet bellicose left-wing pressure group, calling itself the One People's Party (OPP). The OPP was determined to keep the band from playing at the state convention of the Libertarian Party of New Jersey, an event being held on the campus at Rutgers University. In fact, this would have been a repeat performance for Poker Face, which played at last year's Libertarian convention.

OPP began a loud and aggressive smear campaign, raising a ruckus not because of anything in the music of Poker Face. The group went after Poker Face because its web site featured, among other things, commentary critical of prosecutions of thousands of people in Europe — including internationally-known best-selling historian, David Irving, sentenced to three years in jail in Austria — on thought control measures that level criminal charges and imprisonment upon those found guilty of the ambiguous accusation of "denying the Holocaust."

Topete — who has both Jewish and Israeli friends who are fully aware of his opposition to laws prohibiting freedom of expression — was accused by the OPP of being "anti-Semitic." And, perhaps even worse, Topete was accused of being a "Holocaust denier" himself — not because he questioned the Holocaust, but because he dared to defend the right of free speech for those who do.

That's right folks, a couple of these guys have long hair. But they are also just about the most devoted group of young patriots in the musical industry today, playing at rallies and conferences and composing music dedicated to exposing all sorts of oppressive tyranny.

Ironically, Topete — who is the son of a Mexican-born father who immigrated legally to the United States — as also accused of "racism" because he has been an outspoken critic of illegal immigration into the United States and has defended the work of the Minutemen, the group that is rallying grass-roots citizens to challenge public officials who refuse to stop the immigration invasion.

Topete has dared to point out that one reason why the United States is facing an immigration invasion is that international big money corporate interests have foisted measures such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (part of the whole global "managed trade" scam) on the people of the United States, Mexico and the whole Caribbean region. He contends that this is the real cause of the economic turmoil that is driving refugees north across the American border.

Topete comments: "The real haters hate the truth. Period."

So the truth is that there was nothing "racist" or "hateful" in the lyrics of the music of Poker Face that was deemed to be troublesome — only the political views of the lead singer, Topete, which, in truth, are simply oldfashioned Americanism and patriotism.

Predictably, local media picked up on the artificially generated controversy and effectively gave the OPP agitators a propaganda edge, drawing attention to the affair.

Despite the assault on Poker Face by the leftist agitators, the Libertarian Party stood behind Poker Face, with one party spokesman declaring, "Nothing in their music says anything about racism or anti-Semitism."

Still, the OPP agitators prevailed. Because the Libertarian convention was being held on the Rutgers campus, university officials canceled the Poker Face appearance.

The publicly funded university's official public position — so as not to be accused of interfering with First Amendment guarantees of freedom of expression — was that the Poker Face participation had to be canceled for the ostensible reason that the band's music might interfere with other events being held in the same campus facility that day. The university claimed that Poker Face had been permitted to play last year because there were no other events scheduled that day.

The real story, though, is that the thought police won the day and the OPP had acted as their public "front" doing the dirty work of behind the scenes smear-bunds such as the powerful Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith and the allied Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).

Both well-funded private spy organizations, the ADL and the SPLC, lent their expertise in heavy-handed censorship and defamation against Topete and Poker Face. The ADL acts primarily as an intelligence and propaganda conduit for the Israeli intelligence service, which closely monitors American political dissent of all types, concerned about possible opposition to Israel, whereas the SPLC is the plaything and cash cow of veteran agitator and leftist fundraiser Morris Dees.

If anyone still has any doubt about the growing impact of efforts to ban freedom of expression — now even freedom of music — on American soil, the story of Poker Face is one that people need to remember. But Topete and Poker Face refused to be silenced and they are now even more committed than ever to speaking — and singing — out.

A journalist specializing in media critique, Michael Collins Piper is the author of ***Final Judgment***, the controversial "underground bestseller" documenting the collaboration of Israeli intelligence in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He is also the author of ***The High Priests of War***, ***The New Jerusalem***, ***The Judas Goats***, and ***Dirty Secrets***, all available from America First Books and First Amendment Books. He has lectured on suppressed topics in places as diverse as Malaysia, Japan, Canada, Russia and Abu Dhabi.

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